BRITISH COLUMBIA

BC STATS Infoline

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highlights

a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

Labour Market

- **British Columbia's unemployment rate edged down 0.1 percentage point to 7.9% (seasonally adjusted) in November.** The improvement in the labour market was due to employment growth. Between October and November, the number of people with jobs increased by 20,000, which was more than enough to absorb the addition of 18,500 British Columbians to the workforce.

  Unemployment rates fell in every province west of Quebec. Manitoba's rate decreased the most (0.6 percentage points), giving that province the lowest unemployment rate (5.5%) in the country. The Canadian rate edged down to 8.0%, as job growth at the national level was able to keep pace with the expansion of the labour force.

  Source: Statistics Canada

- **The number of help-wanted ads in BC newspapers declined in November.** The province's help wanted index dropped 3 points to 117 (1996=100) between October and November. Nationally, the help-wanted index was unchanged at 144. *Source: Statistics Canada*

The Economy

- **Labour income (wages, salaries and benefits) in British Columbia rose 0.8% (seasonally adjusted) in the third quarter, posting the strongest gain so far this year.** Canadian labour income edged up 0.2%. A 0.2% decline in Ontario (where labour disruptions during the summer pulled down the total) was enough to offset increases in most of the provinces. Saskatchewan (+1.7%) and Manitoba (+1.3%) posted the strongest increases. Labour income was down in most parts of Atlantic Canada.

  Year-to-date, labour income in British Columbia was 1.9% higher than in the first nine months of 1997. This compares to a 4.1% year-to-date increase in the January-to-September period of 1997.

  Canadian labour income was up 3.7% in the first nine months of 1998, with all provinces showing gains ranging from 1.9% in BC to 6.9% in Alberta. *Source: SC, Catalogue 13F0016XPB*

- **Department store sales in British Columbia and the two territories slipped 1.7% in October, compared to the same month last year.** Department stores in the province have had a rough go since the spring, with sales falling in all but two of the last six months. In the rest of the country, department stores managed to increase their sales over October 1997 levels. Saskatchewan (+9.0%) led the way, followed by Ontario, where sales were up 7.1%. New Brunswick (+1.4%) posted the smallest gain. Overall, Canadian sales rose 4.7%.

  Source: Statistics Canada

- **The value of building permits issued by BC municipalities continued to decline in October.** Total permits were down 12.8% (seasonally adjusted), as both residential (-13.1%) and non-residential (-12.3%) building plans were cut back. Nationally, the value of building permits fell 7.9%, with a 5.8% decline in residential permits and a 10.2% drop in non-residential permits.

  Source: Statistics Canada

Saving More, Giving Less

- **One in three (31%) British Columbians reported making a contribution to an RRSP on their 1997 income tax form.** While the likelihood of contributing to RRSPs was about the same in BC as in most other provinces (the Ca-

Report **Participation in Post-Secondary Education**

Did you know...

Per capita health care expenditures (public and private) in British Columbia were $2,685 in 1996, more than in any other province. The national average was $2,511. Drug costs ($362 per Canadian) were virtually the same as the cost of physicians' services ($363).

nadian average was 30%), British Columbians made larger contributions.

The median income of BC taxfilers contributing to RRSPs was $36,000, and their median contribution was $2,900, more than in any other province except Ontario (also at $2,900). The $2,900 contribution in BC represents 8.1% of median income. This compares to 7.4% nationally, and rates ranging from 6.2% to 7.7% in other regions. The median is the income or contribution level which is exceeded by half of all taxfilers. *Source: SC, Small Area Data*

- **One in five (20%) British Columbia taxfilers reported making charitable donations in 1997.** British Columbia had the lowest contribution rate of any province. In the rest of Canada, contribution rates ranged from 21% of all taxfilers in Newfoundland to 30% in Manitoba. Median donations were lowest in Quebec ($100). Newfoundlanders were the most generous–their contribution of $270 represented about 1% of donors' median income ($27,900). In comparison, British Columbians who gave to charities gave about half a percent ($200) of their median income ($36,700), which was the same as at the national level (where the median donation was $170, and the median income was $36,000).
Source: SC, Small Area Data

Film Production

- **Canadian film and video producers operating in the province earned revenues of $54.6 million and employed 1,024 full-time, part-time and freelance workers in 1996/97.** The 75 Canadian producers operating in the province filmed 977 productions, 388 of which were TV commercials. In addition, 242 TV productions and 255 corporate videos were made in British Columbia. These figures do not include the activities of foreign film producers operating in the province, in-house productions by TV stations, or National Film Board activities.

  The number of home-grown (Canadian made) film productions in the province has been falling since the early 1990s, when just over 2,000 productions were created in the province. This is partly due to an ongoing decline in the number of TV commercials produced locally. In 1992/93, there were 1,203 commercials produced in British Columbia, three times as many as in 1996/97 (388).

  These figures do not imply that the film industry in BC is in a decline. Last year, almost three-quarters of the production budgets for films shot in the province were for foreign productions, which are not included in the survey.
Source: Statistics Canada & BC STATS

- **BC's film and video production industry, though tiny, has grown faster than almost every other industry in the province during the 1990s.** Its contribution to BC's GDP has more than tripled, rising from $74.3 million (constant 1992 dollars) in 1991 to $255.1 million last year. *Source: Statistics Canada, Provincial GDP by Industry*

The Nation

- **Canada's real gross domestic product (GDP) advanced 0.4% (seasonally adjusted) in the third quarter.** The growth was due to a combination of increased domestic demand for goods and services and an improvement in the trade balance. The major factor contributing to the growth in domestic demand was a 0.6% increase in consumer spending. Spending on durables–sometimes viewed as an indicator of consumer confidence in the economy–was up +1.4%, with more moderate gains in other categories. Government current expenditures (wages, salaries and supplies) advanced 0.3% in the third quarter, but business investment was cut back 0.3% due to a 2.6% decline in residential investment.

  The trade balance improved as exports of Canadian goods and services increased 1.4%, while imports fell back 2.0%. Machinery and equipment exports were up 6.7%, offsetting declines in other categories. Computer exports, which accelerated to a 15.5% increase in the third quarter, were the main reason for the advance.
Source: Statistics Canada

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For data originating from Statistics Canada: data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the publication name or catalogue number.

December 4, 1998

Infoline Report:

Post-Secondary Education Participation in B.C. by Persons Aged 18-29

Contact: Stephen Pal / (250) 952-6111
Research, Evaluation and Accountability

Originally published in October 1998 issue of *Labour Force Statistics*. Annual subscription is $60 + GST

1. Introduction . . . Post-secondary education (PSE) participation rates have often been calculated using administrative enrolment data. Unfortunately, these administrative data are not always consistent between provinces and often do not include those attending vocational programs or private post-secondary institutions. This article uses Labour Force Survey data from Statistics Canada which captures education participation in PSE programs for credit including those in trade/vocational programs and private training institutions. All data used here covers the 4th quarter period from 1976 to 1997. This article focuses on individuals aged 18 to 29, with further breakdowns of those aged 18 to 24 and aged 25 to 29.

2. PSE Participation Rates in B.C. and Canada . . . Estimates from the Labour Force Survey indicate that there were over 1.2 million persons aged 18 to 29 in Canada participating in full and part-time post-secondary programs in 1997. Between 1976 to 1997, the PSE participation rate in B.C. for persons aged 18 to 29 increased from 14 per cent to 27 per cent, compared with an increase from 15 per cent to 26 per cent for Canada.

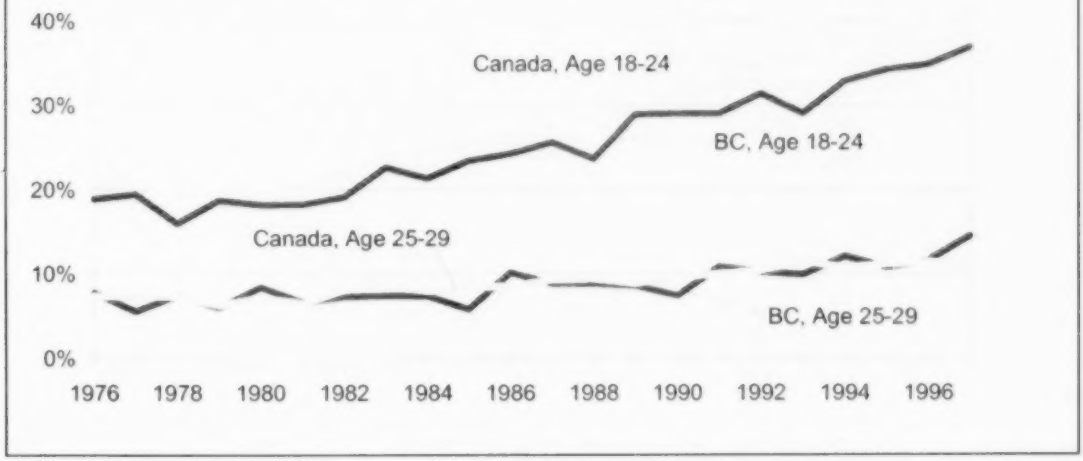
For the first time since 1976, the PSE participation rate for B.C. surpassed that of Canada in 1997. In B.C., the ongoing tuition freeze at public PSE institutions along with a more developed private PSE sector relative to other provinces are likely contributing factors.

Figure 1 shows PSE participation rates split between those aged 18 to 24 and 25 to 29 for B.C. and Canada. In Canada between 1976 and 1997, the proportion of those aged 18 to 24 attending PSE programs almost doubled, increasing from 21 per cent in 1976, to 38 per cent in 1997.

The PSE participation rate in B.C. for those aged 18 to 24 has remained slightly below the Canadian average, though increasing from 19 per cent to 37 per cent by 1997. The notable gap in participation rates between Canada and B.C. in 1993 and 1994 has closed considerably by 1997.

For individuals aged 25 to 29, there is a substantially lower rate of post-secondary attendance than for those aged 18 to 24. Nonetheless, both B.C. and Canada experienced a slow but steady increase in participation, from 7 per cent in 1976 to 11 per cent in 1997.

Figure 1: PSE Participation Rates for BC and Canada by Age, 1976 to 1997



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Growth in B.C's PSE participation rate for those aged 25 to 29 has generally kept pace with the rest of Canada over the last 20 years, but jumped ahead of the Canadian average in 1997 to 14 per cent.

3. Inter-Provincial Comparison of PSE Participation Rates . . . Figure 2 compares PSE participation rates broken down by age group in Canada and selected provinces for the years 1976 and 1997. As would be expected, for both years and in all regions of Canada, participation rates were higher for those aged 18 to 24 than those aged 25 to 29.

PSE participation rates vary from province to province, with Quebec continuing to have the highest rate for those aged 18 to 24. This is due in large part to their unique CEGEP college system.

In 1997, B.C. and Ontario together saw the second highest PSE participation rate at 37 per cent for 18 to 24 year olds.

For those aged 25 to 29, B.C. saw the highest PSE participation rate in 1997, rising to over 14 per cent from 8 per cent in 1976. The province with the smallest increase in PSE participation for this older group over the past 21 years was Alberta, remaining fairly steady at just under 10 per cent.

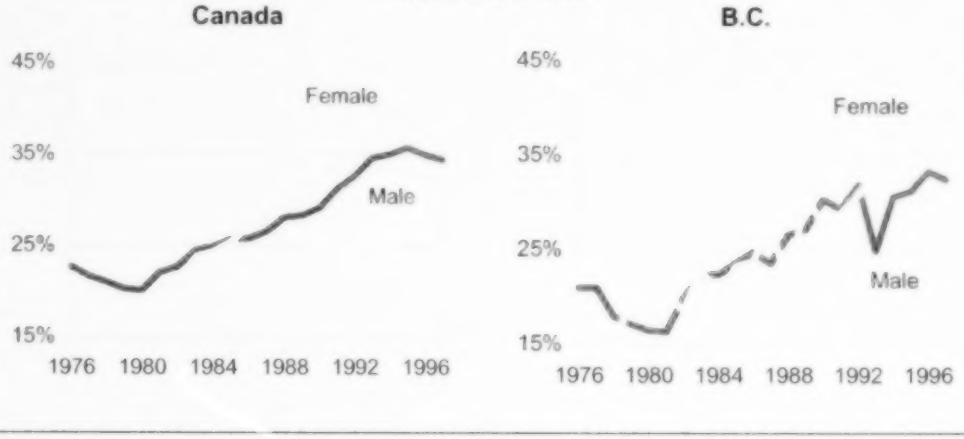
Figure 2: PSE Participation Rates by Age, Canada and Provinces

	1976			1997		
	Age 18-24	Age 25-29	Age 18-29	Age 18-24	Age 25-29	Age 18-29
Canada	**20.6%**	**7.4%**	**15.4%**	**38.0%**	**11.2%**	**26.3%**
B.C.	18.8%	7.7%	14.3%	36.8%	14.4%	26.8%
Alberta	17.0%	9.6%	14.1%	32.8%	9.7%	22.8%
Sask.	17.6%	5.0%	13.1%	31.9%	8.3%	22.6%
Manitoba	20.9%	6.1%	15.2%	29.8%	9.9%	21.3%
Ontario	23.3%	8.5%	17.4%	36.8%	11.5%	25.4%
Quebec	21.1%	6.7%	15.4%	45.2%	11.5%	31.1%
Atlantic	15.5%	5.4%	11.6%	36.3%	8.9%	24.6%

4. Participation by Women and Men . . . Figure 3 breaks down PSE participation by men and women aged 18 to 24 for Canada and B.C. from 1976 to 1997. Notably there has been a trend towards higher participation rates for women, relative to men, yet both have been trending upward. In Canada, up until 1985, the participation rate for men was higher than for women. However, beginning in 1986, the PSE participation rate for women surpassed that of men. Since 1995, the gap has widened notably, as male participation fell slightly and female participation has continued to increase.

In B.C., changes have been similar to that of Canada with a general ongoing rise in PSE participation by 18 to 24 year olds. Since 1993, participation in post-secondary education by women aged 18 to 24 has increased faster than for men in B.C. By 1997, the PSE participation rate for B.C. women aged 18 to 24 was 41 per cent, compared to 32 per cent for B.C. men. PSE participation by B.C. women is similar to the Canadian average for women, but B.C. men trail the average for Canadian men.

Figure 4: Post-Secondary Education Participation Rates, Age 18-24
Canada and B.C.



Over the past 20 years there has been a growing public preference by Canadians for more post-secondary learning opportunities. In response there have been increased investments to expand post-secondary education and training spaces by many provincial governments, including B.C. The growth in PSE participation has likely occurred for both labour market and personal reasons.

Most would agree that employment demand for university and college graduates is growing faster than the demand for workers with only high school completion. In part this relates to the growth in technology and increased knowledge requirements by workers. Overall, better job prospects and higher salaries appear to have been signals to which young persons (and their parents) have responded. In particular, women appear to have seen the fastest growth in PSE participation. Societal changes and more choices available to women have enabled considerable gains in their PSE participation in both B.C. and Canada. Considerable evidence suggests that women improve their career choices and earning power when have higher education.

Why then has PSE participation by men risen slower and now trails that of women? In part this may relate to the fact that earnings in the goods industries for jobs not requiring post-secondary learning continue to remain higher than lesser skilled jobs in services. Since the goods sector still predominately employs men, it may be that these kinds of work offer more of an incentive to some younger men rather than immediately attending post-secondary education or training following secondary school.

Recent Feature Articles (in *Labour Force Statistics*)

March 1998	The British Columbia Labour Market - 1st Quarter 1998	**July 1998**	Students in the Labour Market - July 1998
April 1998	Union Coverage of Employee Workers	**August 1998**	Self-employment in British Columbia 1976-1997
May 1998	Job Search Methods of the Unemployed in British Columbia - 1976-1997	**September 1998**	The British Columbia Labour Market - 3rd Quarter 1998
June 1998	The British Columbia Labour Market - 2nd Quarter 1998		

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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jul 1/98	% change on one year ago
BC	4,014.3	1.3
Canada	30,300.4	1.0
GDP and INCOME		% change on
(BC - at market prices)	1997	one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	109,347	3.3
GDP *($ 1992 millions)*	98,201	2.2
GDP *($ 1992 per Capita)*	24,775	0.1
Personal Disposable Income *($ 1992 per Capita)*	16,340	-2.3
TRADE ($ millions)		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) Sep	2,864	1.5
Merchandise Exports (raw) Sep	2,217	3.0
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) Sep	2,765	-2.3
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		% change on
(all items - 1992=100)	Oct '98	one year ago
BC	110.1	0.4
Canada	109.0	1.0
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	Nov '98	one year ago
Labour Force - BC	2,065	1.9
Employed - BC	1,903	3.1
Unemployed - BC	162	-9.8
		Nov '97
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	7.9	8.9
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	8.0	9.0
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Dec 2/98	Dec 3/97
Prime Business Rate	6.75	5.50
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	6.40	5.90
- 5 year	6.80	6.70
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Dec 2/98	Dec 3/97
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.5367	1.4178
US $ *(reciprocal of above rate)*	0.6507	0.7053
AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Sep '98	one year ago
BC	619.56	1.0
Canada	603.24	0.8

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Earnings: Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

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Please let us know what you think.

A note on the identification of "found" items on our site. We have been working hard to properly identify all the files on our site, but many items still bear file names rather than proper titles. We decided to give you the advantage of the new features as soon as they were ready and continue our renaming efforts as time permits.

Released this week by BC STATS

- Immigration Highlights, First 3 Quarters, 1998

Next week

- Tourism Room Revenue, August 1998
- Labour Force Statistics, November 1998

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